

OS-9 Newsletter

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Contact: Rodger Alexander, 3404 Illinois Lane, Bellingam, WA 98226

"BUGS"

--Update--

SHELL+ BUG

ShellPlus is an enhanced version of the original Shell and is available on Compuser, Delphi, Genie, and most CoCo/OS9 Bulletin Boards. Personally I consider ShellPlus a must on any OS-9 system.

During the past year, several patches have been posted on OS9 Bulletin Boards/Sigs dealing with the "data-size" bug.

PATCH-1 by Paul Seniura

Shell+ has long plagued such products as RiBBS v2.0, Multivue Canvas and UltiMusE-III because Shell+ is not handling data area size properly when it forks or chains to another module. It should read the module's data size from its header, then compare it to any overriding parameters to see if the caller wants more memory than the module's specifications. If so, the program should increase this during the fork or chain call.

Shell+ sets a minimum data area size of \$1F pages (31x256 bytes), almost a full 8k of RAM. This has been screwing up a lot of programs and utilities! If your program needs only 20 bytes, it should ONE 256-byte page, since that is OS9's smallest increment of RAM for "users" programs. Shell+ will give your program an entire 8k of RAM as it is presently designed -- a huge waste.

Here's the ModPatch "Patch" file to change the minimum data size to ONE page of RAM:

```
L shell
C 130f 1f 01
v
```

There is another possible patch you can do to cause Shell+ to reduce the 8K data size to 256-bytes when another process is called up requiring the initialization of another shell. This patch is not as crucial as the above patch and you may choose not to include it into your Shell+ module.

```
L shell
C 1313 1f 01
v
```

PATCH-2 by Seattle 68xxxMUG "Gang"

This is not a bug fix, but a "cosmetic" patch to cause Shell+ to boot up with a more practical/user friendly OS9 prompt. When using the original Shell, OS9 would simply print "OS9:". After this patch is installed, Shell+ will display a much more informational prompt: "12:30:00[Term]/D0/CMDS:" (Time [Device] / Path:).

Yes you can change the Shell+ prompt on the fly from the keyboard

```
ENTER: p="")[@]$>"
```

but you cannot change the "TERM" prompt automatically with a script file command line in the startup file. It can only be done "by hand". The following ModPatch "Patch" file will hard-wire the code into the Shell+ module:

```
L shell
C 3d 4f 29
C 3e 53 5b
C 3f 39 40
C 40 5b 5d
C 41 50 24
C 42 5d 3a
C 43 3a 20
v
```

MODPATCH BUG:

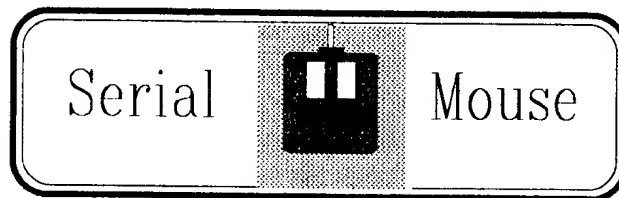
Greg Law tracked down a bug in Modpatch. Basically, the bug shows up when you have modpatch scripts with single-character lines.

When modpatch sees a line with only one character, it "skips" the entire next line!

- * Here are some comments...
- * The next line has only one character, so it triggers the bug.

```
l module  
c ...
```

The one-character comment line causes the "l module" command to be skipped. So of course modpatch can't find the right bytes to change! <Ergh!> People who have tried might notice that the ACIA patch floating around has this one-character comment line just before the.... "l aciapak" line. (ooooops!) Deleting the previous once character line (or making it longer) should avoid the bug.



You can use a "standard" serial mouse on your OS-9 system. Simply download "SMOUSE.AR" from Compuserv, Delphi, Genie or other OS9 Bulletin Board Services.

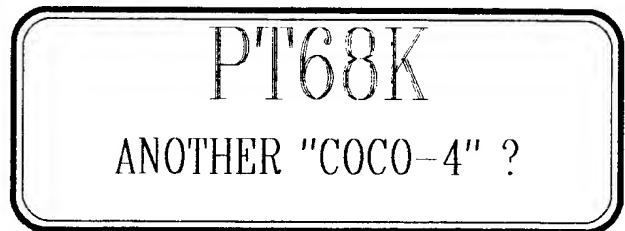
SMOUSE.AR contains several "ipatch" files to upgrade the standard CC310 module in your OS9Boot to properly respond to either the Microsoft mouse or the Logitech mouse. Mouse driver source code and definition files are also included in SMOUSE.AR.

Run the lpatch from SMOUSE.AR to the original MW CC310 you should wind up with a version of CC310 which incorporates both Kent Meyer's patches and the serial mouse patches. Once you've installed the serial mouse on your RS-232 Pak (/T2 pak) you will not be able to use that serial port for a modem unless you unplug the mouse and re-boot with an OS-9 disk that has the regular CC310 and ACIAPAK+T2 installed in it.

I'll be uploading an improved CC310 patch soon... if you get the mouse working you'll want to watch for that one. I'll also be uploading patches for the regular CC310 and Tandy Colour Mouse because it really improves IRQ response.

--Bruce Isted, Delphi---

Editor's Note: Besides Bruce Isted's SMOUSE.AR file, you will also need Bob Santy's IPATCH utility and of course the AR (archiving) utility. All of these files are available for downloading from Compuserv, Delphi, Genie, etc. They may also be available from your local OS9 computer club's Public Domain Library.



For all of you who are debating about which new computer to buy...the MM/1 or the Tomcat...add another to your list. This computer has been around before the other two were even conceived. It's called the PT68K-4 and here are some of the features:

- 68000 CPU running at 12 or 16 MHz
- 512k to 4096K of RAM on main board
- Optional memory board supports up to 8MB
- Four RS232 ports
- Supports MFM hard drive
- FD controller supports 360K, 720K, 1.2M, and 1.44M drives
- Battery backed clock on-board
- Two 8-bit parallel ports
- Seven XT-compatible expansion ports.
- Mounts in standard XT or baby AT cabinet and uses std. IBM-style pwr supply.

Since this computer has XT-compatible slots, you can use readily-available CHEAP cards to

expand! OS9 68K is available with editor/assembler and Microware C compiler. CGA/EGA/VGA cards are supported by this machine. VGA is currently supported in 320 x 200 x 256 and 800 x 600 x 16 modes under OS9. They are planning to write device drivers for Super VGA early next year. Also, there is supposed to be a public domain program that allows the user to set up multiple windows and hot-key between them (similar to what we're used to on the CoCo 3)

For more information, write: PERIPHERAL TECHNOLOGY 1480 Terrell Mill Rd. Suite 870 Marietta, GA 30067 1-404-984-0742

--David Philipsen, Delphi--



One of the things you've been hearing a lot about in OS-9 Level Two windows. What I will attempt to do in this article is give you a little primer on windows and how they work.

First of all, a window is a graphic screen that routes information from other parts of the system (in OS-9) to the terminal. This is not to be confused with graphics (a whole different animal altogether). In other words, windowing is a way of creating separate but connected environments to do your work or the computer's work. Think of them as different devices like the disk drive or the printer.

Unlike the devices mentioned above, windows are made in and exist in software only. They are only figments of the computer's mind!

Let's go to an analogy to make windowing a little more down to earth. Consider a window as a container or box. Windows come in many sizes and shapes. So let's say we create a bunch of windows (level 2 can handle up to 16 windows at one time). These windows can vary in size anywhere from pixel size to filling up the whole screen. And if a window is smaller than a screen it can be located anywhere within the screen. Wait, there's more! Windows can be located off screen or even on top of/within each other.

Back to the boxes. Okay, we've got these boxes of different sizes. Now punch a little hole in each box and connect tubes between each box. These tubes are extremely flexible so that the boxes can be shifted around each other or even on top of each other and still remain attached. What are the tubes for? Well, the pipes are little conduits to pass information back and forth between these boxes.

Now we go back to the real world. You've got OS-9 booted up and you're looking at the terminal screen. You've created several boxes, ummmm, I mean windows. You hit <CLEAR> and the screen changes to a different color and usually is empty except for the prompt.

You're now in your first window. Big deal! Right? Well, try typing: `'dir >/term'`. Nothing happen? Okay, now hit <CLEAR> again. There's the directory on the original screen.

What we did was switch from the terminal screen to the first window and send a directory command back to the terminal screen (>/term). Remember the tubes? Not only can you send info in that direction but the other way too.

This is accomplished by typing (from the terminal screen) `''dir >/w''`. Now here's a listing in that window. You can send just about any command back and forth this way. In other words, separate environments but connected.

For those of you a little new to the system, the `''>''` command means the characters immediately following are a device. Obviously, then `''/w''` means `''device window''`. The windows are numbered /w to /w15 and are given their labels by their creator. The command to create a window is `''init /Wxx''`. Try `''init /w4''` or `''init /w7''`, then `''shell i=/w4''` or `''shell i=/w7''`.

I'll go into one other aspect of windows. Remember my mentioning the boxes inside the boxes? These are the overlay windows. If you've ever used those big fancy programs of big blue or big mac or even multivue, you've seen those pulldown or popup windows. Guess what? We can do this too! All they are are overlay windows. In other words, they're temporary windows that print themselves over the existing screen and when you're done with them, they destroy themselves. I can't go into details on overlays at this point because it is a bit complicated for this article. In the next

installment I'll go into more detail on overlays. If you can't wait, I suggest you get `''The Complete Rainbow Guide to OS9 Level II''` by Dibble and Puckett (you can get it at any Radio Shack).

To summarize, windows are software devices that handle all information going to the screen. Each window can handle information flow through itself at the same time as any or all the other windows are handling their own information flow OR back and forth as I have shown. Of course, these examples are very primitive and the possible applications for windowing in OS9 are limitless.

--Mike Pleas

--Bellingham OS-9 Users Group

WINDOWMAKER

Shell+ scriptfile

WINDOWMAKER is a `''scriptfile''` just like your Startup file for OS9 Level-II with Shell+. WINDOWMAKER prompts the user for the Window Number and then prompts for the `''type''` of window desired. Notice the `''VAR''`iable and `''Prompt''` functions.

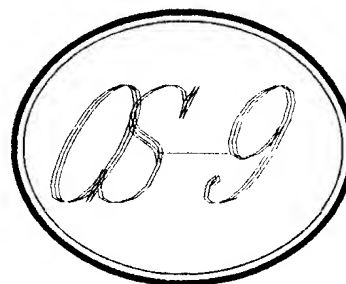
Shell+ is available on DELPHI, COMPUSERV, BASE ACCUMULATOR (206-455-3410), BBQ-RIBBS (206-676-5787), FAR POINT STATION (206-285-8335), and DATA WAREHOUSE (509-325-6787).

Listing:
cls

```

echo
echo WMAKER
echo window maker with typeset
echo by Ken Heist
merge /h0/sys/stdpats_4 /h0/sys/
stdptrs /h0/sys/stdfonts >/w
echo
echo
echo TYPES:
echo 1 40x24 text 8c 2Kmem.
echo 2 80x24 text 8c 4Kmem.
echo 5 640x192 graphic 2c16Kmem.
echo 6 320x192 graphic 4c16Kmem.
echo 7 640x192 graphic 4c32Kmem.
echo 8 320x192 graphic16c 32Kmem.
echo
Prompt Choose Window (1-15):
var.0
Prompt What Type:
var.1
if %1=1
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 1 0 0 28 18 0 1
1 >/w%0
    display 1b 31 1 18 1b 32 0 1b
33 1 1b 34 1 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type1 40x24 Text 8c
    2Kmem. >/w%0
else
if %1=2
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 2 0 0 50 18 0
    1 1 >/w%0
    display 1b 31 1 18 1b 32 0
    1b 33 1 1b 34 1 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type2 80x24 Text 8c
    4Kmem. >/w%0
else
if %1=5
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 5 0 0 50 18 0
    1 2 >/w%0
    display 1b 3a c8 01 >/w%0
    display 1b 32 0 1b 33 1 1b
    34 2 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type5 640x192 Graphic
    2c 16Kmem. >/w%0
else
if %1=6
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 6 0 0 28 18 0
    1 2 >/w%0
    display 1b 3a c8 01 >/w%0
    display 1b 32 0 1b 33 1 1b
    34 2 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type6 320x192 Graphic
    4c 16Kmem. >/w%0
else
if %1=7
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 7 0 0 50 18 0
    1 2 >/w%0
    display 1b 3a c8 01 >/w%0
    display 1b 32 0 1b 33 1 1b
    34 1 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type7 640x192 Graphic
    4c 32Kmem. >/w%0
else
if %1=8
    iniz w%0
    display 1b 20 8 0 0 28 18 0
    1 2 >/w%0
    display 1b 3a c8 01 >/w%0
    display 1b 32 0 1b 33 1 1b
    34 2 >/w%0
    shell i=/w%0&
    echo Type8 320x192 Graphic
    16c 32Kmem. >/w%0
else
endif
clrif

```



RAM DISK

by F. Calcraft

I have found some great ways to make use of a RAM disk. Of course a RAM disk is a good place to store files temporarily (archives or bootfiles, for example) but I also discovered that after adding and deleting files to a disk over an extended period of time, one ends up with a lot of file fragments and scattered small blocks of free sectors. It is possible to put most of those free sectors together and end up with more total empty space as well.

Assume that the floppy needing reorganizing is /d0. The command

```
ENTER: free /d0
```

Shows total free sectors and largest block of sectors and shows name of disk (important!)

```
ENTER: format /r0
```

At the name prompt, give the RAMdisk the name displayed by FREE (do not include the quotes)

```
ENTER: dsave -bs35 /d0 /r0 !  
      shell -x-p
```

This will copy the whole floppy contents file by file, including the boot.

```
ENTER: backup /r0 /d0 #40k
```

This will back up the RAM disk to original floppy. You might have

to reformat the floppy first if it is well used.

```
ENTER: free /d0
```

You will probably find that the number of free sectors is larger, as well as the largest block.

Here is how you can use your RAM disk to to a single swap backup:

```
ENTER: format /r0
```

This must be done before RAM drive can be used

```
ENTER: backup /d0 /r0 #40k      -  
      source to RAM
```

```
ENTER: backup /r0 /d0 #40k      -  
      RAM to destination
```

This saves the frustration and bother of having to sit there and swap disks back and forth in the drive. Since I have the odd combination of a double-sided drive and a single-sided drive, I use the trick to backup the /d2 side of a disk.

TELENET TIPS

Tymnet and Telenet are local telecommunications ``nodes'' that permit us to call Compuserp or Delphi or Genie without having to pay long distance charges.

Telenet offers a way to tell it you're about to transfer a LOT of data. It ``Prepares the network

for bulk file transfers.''
(quoted from the Telenet booklet
which you can get for free by
calling them up at 1-800-336-
0437)

Just before you start download-
ing, get back to the Telenet
command prompt. To do this, type
'@' <Enter> ('At-sign'
'Enter') Note that the '@' must
be the first character typed after
the previous carriage return. You
may have to type 'Enter' '@'
'Enter' if you've typed other junk
and are not at a fresh prompt
within Delphi (or whatever).

Now, at the Telenet prompt, type:
DTAPE <Enter>

I believe this returns you to
connected mode. (If not, you'll
see another Telenet prompt, at
which you type CONT <Enter> to get
back to connected mode.) Now do
the download. When the download
is finished, send a break (a true
line-break) to get out of DTAPE
mode.

Basically, when you enter DTAPE,
Telenet optimizes itself for bulk
file transfers rather than being
optimized for a login session and
ASCII text etc.

You'll probably want to get out of
this mode when you're done trans-
ferring files. Esp if you're
going to read the forums, and
perhaps more especially if you're
going to talk in a conference! If
all you're doing is downloads, it
may not be worth the effort of
entering and leaving this mode for
each file transfer! I've not

tried it myself, and I'd be very
happy to hear any comparisions of
transfer speeds with DTAPE on &
off.

With some terminal programs, you
may be able to automate all of the
above into a macro.

--Ed Kuns, Internet--

Mt Raineer CoCo Club

The Mount Rainer Color Computer
Club meets every month on the
second tuesday at the new Par-
kland/Spanaway Library on 138th,
and Pacific Ave. We start around
7:00 pm, and end around 8:45 pm.

Each meeting we have two to three
speakers on various subjects. Our
past meetings we have had speakers
on:

1. MM/1 and TC/9 comparison
2. OS-9 Help
3. DynaCalc
4. Phantomgraph
5. Hard Drives
6. 80 Track Drives
7. And a whole lot more.

The president is Erich P. Sweaney,
he is the youngest attendant. He
has published his own newsletter
from June 1989 through June 1990,
and have had several articles
published from other magazines,
and had national reviews on his
projects.

Other attendants of our meeting
include Otto Schliep, vice presi-

Club Activities

dent, he is one of our disk drives, and hardware experts. Then there is our Alan Johnson, he is in charge of calling some of the attendants and reminding people of the meetings, he is a very knowledgeable with OS-9, RS-Dos, Unix, and C. Our other attendants all contribute to our meetings from their knowledge.

Our group activities through out the year has been car pooling up to other groups meetings, attending local computer fairs, and contributing to newsletter with articles and or programs. We do not charge any of our attendants for membership, we have also been this way and will probably never change.

Once in a while if we have a member who has something to sell, we kinda of have a little swap within our group meeting. And we most always leave the last fifteen to twenty minutes for an open discussion.

If you would like to attend one of our meetings, or have any questions you would like answered, please give me a call at 535-9733 and ask for Erich Sweaney.

OS-9

Port O'CoCo

Recently I attended the Kitsap Computer Society. This is a group of the various machine groups that are in the county. I told them about the FCC rules and policies regarding the broadcasting of community productions. They were VERY excited about it. Now we have to get a production going.

We thought of having about half the time to a topic like BASIC and then something about a piece of software and then a quick overview of the clubs. The programs would be 30 minutes and aired once a month. This would be underwritten by the various computer stores in the area to give us a budget for supplies, tape, and maybe a little walk-away money for those involved.

Another project that Port O'CoCo is involved in is the Computer Swap meet in the Kent Commons, (Kent, WA) on December 8th where we set up a CoCo informational and demonstration booth. There is also going to be a Computer Fair in the Kitsap Mall in Silverdale the 15th-16th of December.

Donald Zimmerman, Port O'CoCo

Washington State BBS Listing

The following BBS list will be of interest to CoCo and OS9 users:

FAR POINT BBS (Seattle)
(206) 285-8335 Basic09 RiBBS (Fido NET)

COLUMBIA HTS. BBS (Longview)
(206) 425-5804 Basic09 RiBBS (Fido NET)

DATA WAREHOUSE BBS (Spokane)
(509) 325-6787 Level-II OS9 BBS

TIME MACHINE BBS (Tri-City)
(509) 586-2559 CoBBS

BARBECUED RIBBS BBS (Bellingham)
(509) 676-5787 PC-Board

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3. Technical help on call
4. Free Classified Ads
5. OS9 BBS with over 200 downloadable files
6. Membership list
7. "How To" Video Library

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE: If you are not already subscriber to OS9 Newsletter, then consider sending in your check now (\$3/6 months or \$6 for 12 months). On January 1st the subscription rates will increase to \$5 & \$10. (still cheap!)

NOTICE TO CLUB PRESIDENTS: Be sure to post or mail in your January meeting agenda prior to December 28th so that they may be included in the January issue of OS9 Newsletter.